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TELEGRAM NO 1563 OF 22 APRIL

INFO PRIORITY BONN, PARIS, UKDEL NATO, MOSCOW.

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BONN TELNO 342: FEDERAL CHANCELLOR'S INVITATION TO MOSCOW

1. AMERICAN REACTIONS TO DATE HAVE BEEN RELATIVELY MUTED, BOTH PUBLICLY AND IN OUR CONTACTS WITH THE ADMINISTRATION. THE AMERICANS HAVE BEEN AWARE OF GERMAN INTEREST IN TOP LEVEL CONTACT WITH MOSCOW AS LEAST SINCE THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S DECLARATION OF 17 JANUARY. DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE ALLIES AND MOSCOW FEATURED IN THE US PAPER "GOALS AND ACTIONS" WHICH VANCE USED DURING HIS VISIT TO EUROPEAN CAPITALS IN FEBRUARY. THE PAPER CONTAINED A SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO SCHMIDT.

2. THE AMERICAN CONCERN IS MORE TO ENSURE THAT THE TIMING OF ANY SUCH VISIT IS RIGHT AND THAT THERE IS A CLEAR UNDERSTANDING AMONG THE ALLIES AND PARTICULARLY ON THE PART OF THE CHANCELLOR HIMSELF ABOUT WHAT HE SHOULD SAY, AND NOT SAY, IN MOSCOW ON MATTERS RELATED TO ALLIED INTERESTS AS A WHOLE. AS REPORTED IN MY TELNO 1536, SCHMIDT'S MAVERICK REMARKS ON TNF ARMS CONTROL AT ESSEN CERTAINLY CAUSED ANNOYANCE HERE. THE AMERICANS FEAR THAT THE RUSSIANS WILL SEEK TO EXPLOIT THESE: AND THAT THE VISIT, COUPLED WITH PERHAPS NEW SOVIET PROPOSALS AT THE WARSAW PACT MEETING IN MID-MAY AND THE AFGHAN REGIME'S PROPOSAL OF 17 APRIL FOR TALKS WITH IRAN AND PAKISTAN AND A REGIONAL CONFERENCE, COULD LEND ITSELF IN A DAMAGING WAY TO MOSCOW'S ANTICIPATED PEACE OFFENSIVE. THEY SHARE OUR FEELING THAT EVEN IF SCHMIDT DOES NOT GO TO MOSCOW UNTIL AFTER THE VENICE SUMMIT, THE TIMING WILL STILL BE TRICKY, EG IN RELATION TO THE MOSCOW OLYMPICS.

3. WE NOW LEARN FROM NSC STAFF THAT BRZEZINSKI WILL BE CONSIDERING THIS AFTERNOON THE DRAFT OF A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CARTER TO SCHMIDT ABOUT THIS INVITATION. THE DRAFT WOULD EXPRESS AGREEMENT ON THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTAINING CONTACTS WITH MOSCOW BUT WOULD QUESTION WHETHER ALLIED INTERESTS WOULD BE SERVED BY THE VISIT TAKING PLACE "IN THE NEXT MONTHS". IT WOULD GO ON TO EXPRESS THE HOPE THAT IN PARTICULAR THE VISIT SHOULD NOT TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE VENICE SUMMIT, IN ORDER TO PERMIT ALLIED SOLIDARITY TO BE MANIFESTED AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL BEFORE ANY INDIVIDUAL ALLIED LEADER MEETS BREZHNEV. THE DRAFT WOULD SAY THAT THERE MAY COME A TIME THIS YEAR WHEN IT WOULD SERVE WESTERN INTERESTS FOR SUCH A MEETING TO TAKE PLACE. THAT JUDGEMENT WOULD DEPEND PARTLY ON SOVIET ACTIONS. THE FIRST PRIORITY, ACCORDING TO THE DRAFT, IS TO

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GET AN UNEQUIVOCALLY UNIFIED APPROACH AMONG THE ALLIES ON HOW TO DETER FURTHER SOVIET AGGRESSION. THERE WOULD THEN BE A PARAGRAPH THANKING SCHMIDT FOR MAKING CLEAR BOTH PUBLICLY AND IN PRIVATE THAT HIS ESSEN SPEECH ON TNF DID NOT REPRESENT A DEPARTURE FROM THE 12 DECEMBER ALLIANCE DECISION, AND WARNING AGAINST THE CONCEPT OF A MUTUAL RESTRAINT IN DEPLOYMENTS.

4. NSC STAFF GAVE THE IMPRESSION THAT ANY MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CARTER ON THIS SUBJECT WOULD BE LIKELY TO GO WITHIN THE NEXT TWO OR THREE DAYS AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT HMG WOULD NOW CONSULT RAPIDLY WITH THEM AS TO THE TIMING AND SUBSTANCE OF OUR OWN PROPOSED RESPONSE. THEY WOULD ALSO WELCOME ANY FURTHER INDICATIONS (BEYOND PARIS TEL 379) WE MAY HAVE OF LIKELY FRENCH ATTITUDES PARTICULARLY ON THE TIMING OF A SCHMIDT VISIT TO MOSCOW.

5. AS BACKGROUND TO CURRENT US THINKING YOU MAY FIND IT USEFUL TO SEE THE LINE WHICH THE US AMBASSADOR IN PARIS WAS INSTRUCTED TO TAKE WITH FRANCOIS-PONCET BEFORE THE GROMYKO VISIT. TEXT OF US INSTRUCTIONS, GIVEN US IN STRICT CONFIDENCE, IS IN M I F T.

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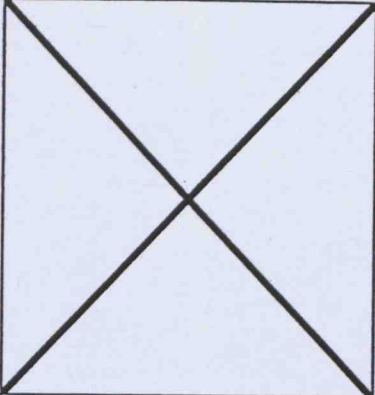
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